(b) whether the entire capital investment of nearly 20 crore has been rendered unproductive as it failed to enhance the charted capacity in the line, if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA):(a) No, Sir.

(b) The work of Tundla-Yamuna bridge was included in the budget in 1995-96. In phase-I, doubling of Tundla-Etmadpur has been completed. The doubling on phase-II is yet to be taken up.

Approval of Planning Commission for Rail Projects

2205. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether mandatory approval from the Planning Commission is required for railway projects of Rs.50 crore and above;

(b) if so, whether the mandatory clearance has been obtained before sanctioning the project 'Neora-Shekhpura Rail Line' in Bihar; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA):(a) No, Sir. However, projects costing Rs.100 crore and above are required to be only appraised by Planning Commission. The limit was earlier Rs.50 crore which has since been raised to Rs.100 crore.

(b) and (c) The work of new line from Daniawan to Biharsharif was approved as material modification of Fatuha-Islampur project basically to have connectivity between the two branch lines *i.e.* Fatuha-Islampur and Bakhtiarpur-Rajgir. Later on, in the year 2000-01, the work of Biharsharif-Barbigha was approved as material modification to the project. Meanwhile, an additional traffic of about 7-8 trains per day was assessed to move *via* Kuil-Mughalsarai. Due to severe capacity constraints *via* Patna, the feasibility of providing an alternative route by construction of the missing links to the already sanctioned Daniawan-Biharsharif-Barbigha was examined. It was considered that with the construction of Barbigha-Sheikhpura and Daniawant-Neora, an alternative route from Kiul to Mugalsarai *via* Sheikhpura, Daniawan,

Neora would get established bye passing Patna. The return of this investment was assessed as 16%. Considering this, the two sections were also approved as material modifications.

Railway's finances have been kept under a separate footing in view of Railways being a fast dynamic setup as a national carrier of goods and passengers. Railways have been given financial independence to discharge its developmental functions and, keeping this in view, a separate Railway Budget is presented. Power for enlargement of scope of sanctioned work has also been vested in the Ministry and this does not require clearance from Planning Commission. In this case also, the material modifications have been approved by the competent authority after following due procedure. The revised cost of the project has been reflected in the budget documents as per the practice being followed.

Rail mishaps in Bihar

2206. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of passengers killed and injured due to derailment of Patna-New Delhi Magadh Vikramshila Express near Buxar on 1st June, 2003;

(b) the number of rail mishaps during the last two years and details of those in Bihar; and

(c) steps being taken to ensure safe and secure train journeys in mishap-prone aeas, especially in Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA):(a) One passenger lost his life and 19 others sustained injuries, including 12 grievously injured in the derailment of 2391 up Magadh-Vikramshila Express running from Patna to New Delhi on 01.06.2003 between Baruna and Buxar stations of Patna-Mughalsarai Section of Danapur Division of East Central Railway.

(b) There were 414 consequential train accidents during the year 2001-2002 and 351* during the year 2002-2003 on Indian Railways. Figures of accidents are maintained Zone-wise and not State-wise.